

# Louisiana Pathways Trainer Procedure Manual

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## Introduction: Louisiana Pathways Early Learning Center Career Development System

**Louisiana Pathways Early Learning Center Career Development System** (LA Pathways) is a statewide career development system that aims to improve the quality of child care in Louisiana. It is designed to support child care employees that are pursuing professional education and encourage teachers to remain committed to the early childhood field.

Louisiana Pathways supports high-quality early learning centers by encouraging staff and teachers to increase their level of professional education over time. This in turn supports a higher level of quality care and education for the children attending the early learning center. Louisiana Pathways does not provide training, but instead provides registries for both early learning center staff and for approved Pathways trainers. Participation in both systems is voluntary, and there are no fees.

Louisiana Pathways is divided into three sections: Career Development System, Scholarship Department, and Pathways Trainer Registry.

**The Career Development** system enrolls teachers and documents their educational accomplishments and professional experience. This information is used to place members on one of three Career Ladders:

- The Administrator Track is available for early learning center directors and assistant directors.
- The Classroom Track is available to teachers and other staff within early learning centers.
- The Family Child Care track is for family childcare providers who care for children in their own home.

Information submitted to the Career Development System is also used to conduct staff qualifications audits for Quality Start, and to determine eligibility for the School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC). Directors and Staff are able to qualify for the SRTC by enrolling in the Pathways Career Development System, and by working at an early learning center that is participating in Quality Start. To receive the SRTC, Pathways will mail notifications to members who have achieved a tax credit eligible level by January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year and inform the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) and the Department of Revenue of qualifying members.

**The Scholarship Department** awards scholarships for CDA Assessment Fees, administrative training, NAFCC Accreditation, and college tuition for early childhood related degrees at Louisiana based colleges and universities. To be eligible for scholarships an individual must be enrolled and active in the Louisiana Pathways and have current verified employment at a Type III Early Learning Center as either the director, assistant director, lead teacher, or assistant teacher or be a CCAP registered Family Child Care Home provider.

**Pathways Trainer Registry** is a list of individuals who have been approved to provide training for early learning center staff. Training hours that are completed by Pathways Approved trainers are able to be counted towards the annual continuing education requirements for Louisiana's licensed early learning centers. The procedures and details related to Pathways trainer approval and the Pathways Trainer Registry make up the remainder of this manual.

Louisiana Pathways also maintains a *CLASS* Registry for individuals who are *CLASS* reliable observers and/or trainers. This list is a publicly posted list of reliable *CLASS* observers/trainers within Louisiana. Participation in the *CLASS* Registry List is **voluntary**, and will allow individuals or organizations seeking additional *CLASS* reliable observers to contact you.

More detailed information about Louisiana Pathways can be found at: <https://nsula.edu/pathways>

## Chapter 1: Trainer Approval Qualifications

### §101. Definition

The Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry is a critical component of Louisiana Pathways Child Care Career Development System and Louisiana’s Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations.

- A. The Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry identifies individuals who have been reviewed and approved to provide high-quality training and professional continuing education courses to early learning center staff. In order to be a part of the Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry, a trainer must apply for and receive trainer approval. Trainer approval and level is determined by the professional experience and education level of the trainer. Once approved, Pathways trainers are eligible to provide training that qualifies as continuing education clock hours for teachers in child care centers, as required by the Licensing Division. It is required that all training used to meet the annual continuing education requirements must be provided by a Pathways approved trainer.
- B. The Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry maintains documentation on approved trainers by name, location, work and educational background, areas of expertise, approval expiration dates and any evaluation information.
- C. The Pathways Trainer Registry helps program administrators, professional development staff, training planners and others connect with trainers across the state for workshops, courses, or conference presentations and document eligibility for licensing credit.

### §102. Trainer Qualifications

#### Qualifications for Trainer Approval

	<b>Education</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Training</b>
<b>Level I</b>	Current <b>CDA credential</b> or equivalent (meets Early Learning Center Teacher I requirements on Louisiana Pathways Career Ladder) <b>OR</b> <b>Associate degree</b> in early care and education, child development or early childhood.	Two years full-time classroom and/or current relevant experience working with programs for children under six or supervising staff or programs for children <b>OR</b> two years of experience applying related discipline to the field of Early Care and Education. <sup>1</sup>	Documentation of completion of “Pathways Trainer Orientation” and “Louisiana’s Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards” <sup>2</sup> FastTrack Trainer applicants see note below. <sup>3</sup>
<b>Level II</b>	<b>Baccalaureate degree</b> in early care and education, child development, early childhood education, or related field (i.e. child and family studies, child life, elementary education psychology, social work, special education, or other focusing on areas of study related to children and families) <b>OR</b> in another discipline related to a specialized knowledge category such as sanitation, nutrition, business, or others relative to the operation of programs for young children.		
<b>Level III</b>	<b>Graduate degree (masters or doctorate)</b> in child development, early childhood education or related field (i.e. child and family studies, child life, elementary education psychology, social work, special education, or other focusing on areas of study related to children and families) <b>OR</b> in another discipline related to a specialized knowledge category such as sanitation, nutrition, business, or others relative to the operation of programs for young children.		

<sup>1</sup> Trainers are expected to maintain a current connection to the field of practice in early care and education. If not employed or regularly involved with a program for children under six, trainers are encouraged to stay abreast of current best practice in the field by attending conferences or training workshops, obtaining further education, working or training with local Child Care Resource & referral agencies or making site visits to programs within the 3 year certification period. For FastTrack applicants who do not meet the experience requirement, a waiver may be requested by their supervisor/administrator.

<sup>2</sup> This requirement must be met prior to approval. “Pathways Trainer Orientation” can be found at <https://www.nsula.edu/pathways/trainerapproval/orientation/>

“Louisiana Department of Education Child Development, Early Learning Development Standards, Learning Activities can be found at <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/data/ECE/Module2/story.html>

<sup>3</sup> Training requirement is waived for FastTrack applicants; however, applicants must review “Louisiana Pathways Trainer Procedure Manual.” prior to approval.

## Chapter 2: Application Process

### §201. Application Process Types

In order to become a part of the Trainer Registry, an individual may register through either an Independent trainer application process or through the LDE System FastTrack application process, if eligible.

1. The following individuals are eligible for the FastTrack application process (detailed in §203 and §205) to deliver training/technical assistance as required by their employment:
  - a. School Board Staff or Teachers
  - b. LA Department of Education Staff
  - c. LA Department of Health and Hospitals Staff from the one of the following offices:
    - Health Promotions Team
    - Bureau of Family Health
    - Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health
    - WIC
    - Children with Special Health Care Needs
  - d. Early Steps Staff/Contractor
  - e. Community Network Lead Agency Staff
  - f. Trainer/TA for Resource and Referral Agency
  - g. Head Start Staff
  - h. Consultant from an Approved LDE Contractor
  - i. CLASS Special Learner Initiative
  - j. Other Initiative/Program Approved by LDE
  - k. Representative of [Tier I Curriculum](#) company
  - l. Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program (BESE Approved)
  - m. Director or Assistant Director of a licensed Type III Early Learning Center at Pathways Director I level or higher (subject to verification)
  - n. Lead Teacher at a licensed Type III Early Learning Center at Pathways Teacher I or higher (subject to verification and recommendation of Director).
2. Those who meet the employment criteria in §201.1, but who wish to conduct for-profit training/technical assistance outside the confines of their employment, must complete the Independent Trainer application process.
3. All others should complete the Independent Trainer application process, detailed in §207 and §209.

### §203. LDE System FastTrack Trainer Initial Application Process

LDE System FastTrack Trainers may be any individual who currently meets the criteria listed in §201.1 and whose supervisor/administrator has requested their approval for job-related purposes.

- A. The following information should be submitted to Louisiana Pathways for Fast Track Trainers:
  1. FastTrack Trainer Approval Application. Application includes supervisor/administrator verification that trainer meets qualifications and has reviewed “Louisiana Pathways Trainer Procedure Manual.”
  2. Trainer Agreement and Release Form

3. CLASS reliability certificates or CLASS Trainer certificates, if applicable.
  4. TS Gold Trainer or Inter-rater reliability certificates, if applicable.
- B. If approved, the trainer will receive a certificate from Louisiana Pathways certifying them as a Trainer I, II, or III based on their documented education and experience as verified by their supervisor/administrator. Subject areas taught are determined by supervising agency.
  - C. The approved trainer will then be included in the Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry, and will receive a unique Pathways trainer identification number, which will be included on the continuing education certificates that he/she provides to attendees.
  - D. Initial approval and each renewal will be effective for a period of 3 years.

### **§205. LDE System FastTrack Trainer Renewal**

- A. FastTrack Trainer Renewal Requirements
  1. Completion of “Trainer Orientation/LDE Overview Update” which is offered at various conferences and is available at no cost on the Louisiana Pathways website--  
<https://nsula.edu/pathways/trainerapproval/renewals/>
  2. Continued employment in a FastTrack eligible category as verified by supervisor/administrator
- A. FastTrack Trainer Renewal Process
 

In order to renew trainer certification, an individual should submit the following information to Louisiana Pathways as least one month prior to their expiration date:

  1. Trainer Renewal Application
  2. Trainer Agreement and Release form.
  3. Documentation of “Trainer Orientation/LDE Overview Update”
  4. Current certifications (CLASS reliability, CLASS trainer, TS Gold Trainer, TS Gold Inter-rater reliability), if applicable

### **§207. Independent Trainer Initial Application Process**

An independent trainer is any individual who would like to provide training to Early Learning Center staff, but does not meet the employment criteria listed in §201.1 or who meets the criteria but wishes to conduct training/technical assistance outside the confines of their employment.

- A. The following information should be submitted to Louisiana Pathways for Independent Trainers:
  1. Independent Trainer Approval Application
  2. Trainer Agreement and Release Form
  3. Current Resume
  4. Documentation of Educational Background (transcripts, copies of credentials, licenses)
  5. Two Trainer Skills Surveys completed by people who have observed them training.
  6. Documentation of completion of “Pathways Trainer Orientation” (<https://www.nsula.edu/pathways/trainerapproval/orientation/> and “Louisiana’s Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards” (<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/data/ECE/Module2/story.html>)).
  7. CLASS reliability certificates or CLASS Trainer certificates, if applicable.
  8. TS Gold Trainer or Inter-rater reliability certificates, if applicable.
- B. If approved, the trainer will receive a certificate from Louisiana Pathways recognizing the trainer level and approved areas for training (CDA Subject areas). Individuals will be certified as Trainer I, II or III based on their documented education and experience.
- C. The approved trainer will then be included in the Louisiana Pathways Trainer Registry, and will receive a unique Pathways trainer identification number, which will be included on the continuing education certificates that he/she provides to attendees.
- D. Initial approval and each renewal will be effective for a period of 3 years.

### **§209. Independent Trainer Renewal**

- A. Independent Trainer Renewal Requirements
 

During each 3-year renewal period an individual trainer should:

  1. Complete 9 clock hours of training in adult learning/presentation skills appropriate for training child care personnel (Train the Trainer)

2. Complete “Trainer Orientation/LDE Overview Update” offered at various conferences and available at no cost on the Louisiana Pathways website-- <https://nsula.edu/pathways/trainerapproval/renewals/>

**B. Independent Trainer Renewal Process**

In order to renew an independent trainer certification, the trainer should submit the following information to Louisiana Pathways as least one month prior to their expiration date:

1. Trainer Renewal Application
2. Trainer Agreement and Release form.
3. Documentation of 9 clock hours of training in adult learning/presentation skills appropriate for training child care personnel (Train the Trainer)
4. Documentation of “Trainer Orientation/LDE Overview Update”
5. Current certifications (CLASS reliability, CLASS trainer, TS Gold Trainer, TS Gold Inter-rater reliability), if applicable.

**§211. Transition Process for Currently Approved Trainers**

Currently approved Pathways trainers are not required to re-apply prior to their renewal term. They may continue with current approval status and current number until renewal date or choose to renew under new system at any time.

**A. Those eligible for FastTrack application (§201) can convert to FastTrack system at any time by submitting the following information to Louisiana Pathways.**

- FastTrack Trainer Approval Application
- Trainer Agreement and Release Form
- CLASS reliability certificates or CLASS Trainer certificates, if applicable (CLASS information from CLASS registry will be transferred for those who already have a CLASS number and have submitted up to date certificates)
- TS Gold Trainer or Inter-rater reliability certificates, if applicable.

Trainers will be renewed for 3 years from the date that they apply for the Fast Track system and will be required to meet the requirements for FastTrack renewal. Trainers will be notified of approval and updated trainer number.

**B. Trainers who do not convert to FastTrack will be considered as Independent Trainers and will be required to meet Independent Trainer renewal requirements and follow the Independent Trainer renewal process (§209) at their expiration date.**

If a trainer qualifies as an LDE System FastTrack trainer (§201), they may also choose to become a FastTrack trainer at the time of their application for renewal. In order to do this, the trainer would need to complete the LDE System FastTrack Trainer Initial Application Process at their expiration date (§203).

Trainers will be renewed for 3 years from the date that they apply for the Fast Track system and will be required to meet the requirements for FastTrack renewal. Trainers will be notified of approval and updated trainer number.

**§212. Changing Trainer Levels**

A trainer may request to be moved to a higher level at any time by completing a Trainer Renewal Application and providing documentation of additional requirements that have been met.

## **Chapter 3: Trainer Requirements**

**§301. Trainer Responsibilities and Terms of Agreement**

Approved trainers must sign a Trainer Agreement Form verifying that they understand and agree to the following provisions.

- A. Each Trainer must meet the renewal requirements (§205 or §209), maintain a connection to the child care field, and participate in any evaluation process requested. Participants in trainings conducted may be surveyed to determine the effectiveness of any Pathways approved trainer.
- B. No more than six (6) hours of approved training may be awarded in any one day. The trainer is responsible for ensuring that they provide instruction for the entire length of the session for which clock hour credit is provided.
- C. A completed training certificate should be issued to each participant.
  - 1. Clock hour credit should be adjusted to reflect actual participation time in instances of late arrival or early dismissal.
  - 2. Certificate should include:
    - i. Participant's name
    - ii. Workshop topic
    - iii. CDA and/or ADM subject area
    - iv. Number of hours
    - v. Date of training
    - vi. Agency logo if applicable
    - vii. Pathways logo (preferably underneath trainer's name and trainer number)
    - viii. Trainer's name, trainer number and signature.
- D. Trainers should train only in subject areas for which they have verifiable training and expertise.
- E. Trainers may only use the **Louisiana Pathways** logo on training certificates as an indication that they are a Pathways approved trainer. The logo may not be used on other materials such as business cards or flyers. However, this material may state that the person is a Louisiana Pathways approved trainer.
- F. Trainers should maintain records of training conducted, including sign-in sheets or other attendance information, for a minimum of 3 years. Sign-in sheets must include the following: Topic, location, trainer name, agency name (if applicable), date and time of training, participant names and email addresses. Email addresses are for surveying participants for purposes of trainer evaluation.
- G. Individuals representing **Louisiana Pathways or the Louisiana Department of Education** may request submittal of the above information or future training schedules at any time.
- H. Individuals representing **Louisiana Pathways or the Louisiana Department of Education** may observe training sessions conducted by Pathways approved trainers at any time.
- I. Trainers should not have any validated instance of abuse or neglect or any criminal conviction.
- J. **The Louisiana Department of Education** maintains the right to disapprove any trainer or rescind a trainer's approval at any time.
- K. Approved trainers who are directors and/or owners of a child care center, may provide up to 6 of the required annual continuing education hours for their center. The center must be in compliance with licensing regulations and any related regulatory agency requirements. The center must not have a history of serious deficiencies or violations that resulted in the recommendation of adverse action against the facility.
- L. Approved trainers may act as a session facilitator to provide the appropriate early care expertise in the event that training is provided by an outside source for specialized training (i.e. FEMA, fire department, speech therapist, child protection or other allied professional). As the facilitator, the trainer may sign the certificates using his/her approval number and maintain records as required above.
- M. Approval as a trainer and the trainer's certificate is contingent upon the trainer abiding by the above requirements. The approval is valid for three (3) years. A violation of any of the above requirements may place trainer approval in jeopardy.
- N. Fast Track trainers who no longer meet the employment criteria for the FastTrack Approval process or who choose to provide training outside the confines of their employment must notify Pathways and complete the Independent Trainer application process immediately.

### §303. Revocation of trainer approval

- A. **The Louisiana Department of Education** maintains the right to disapprove any trainer or rescind a trainer's approval at any time.
- B. Approval as a trainer and the trainer's certificate is contingent upon the trainer abiding by the requirements outlined in **§301**. A violation of any of the requirements may place current/or future trainer approval in jeopardy.

#### **Chapter 4: Release of information**

##### **§401. Required Participation in the Approved Trainer Verification List**

Name and approval expiration date of all Pathways approved trainers will be published on Pathways website on the Approved Trainer Verification List. This list is for the reference of licensing surveyors, Resource and Referral agencies, Community Networks and others who wish to verify approval status. No contact information will be included on the verification list.

##### **§403. Optional Participation in the Approved Trainer Referral List**

- A. Trainers who wish to be referred to others as potential training providers must give permission to Pathways to publish their contact information. Trainers wishing to be included on the Approved Trainer Referral List should circle "give" permission when completing the "Permission for Release of Information" form, included in the Trainer Agreement Form.
- B. Trainers who select to be included in the Approved Trainer Referral List will have their first and last name, city, parish, CLASS reliability information and email address included on the Louisiana Pathways and the Louisiana Department of Education websites, or sent via email. The information will be released only for referral purposes.
- C. Trainers who do not wish to be included on the referral list should circle "do not give" permission when completing the "Permission for Release of Information" form attached to the Trainer Agreement.
- D. If at any time, a trainer wishes to be removed from the Approved Trainer Referral List, he/she may submit a written request for removal via mail or email.

#### **Chapter 5: Deferred Applicants**

##### **§501. Reasons for Deferral**

Applicants for trainer approval may be deferred if they fail to provide documentation that they meet the employment, education, or experience criteria. Applicants who are deferred may submit additional information to document that they meet the criteria and request re-evaluation for trainer approval. Upon receipt of this information, the approval authority (Career Development Coordinator) makes a final decision for approval or deferral.

##### **§503. Appeal Process for Deferred Trainers**

- A. In cases where the applicant disagrees with the final decision of the approval authority, they may appeal the decision and request that their documentation be considered by a review committee.
- B. The review committee shall be made up of the Executive Director of NSU Child and Family Network and at least 2 other persons appointed by the Executive Director.
- C. The deferred applicant may submit additional information or simply request review of previously submitted information for consideration by the review committee.
- D. The decision of the review committee will be final for the current application.
- E. The applicant may re-apply at any time if he/she documents that trainer qualifications have been met.